



Lilian of Hampshire



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Chapter 1 by Jayde Avalon

Lilian Winchurch's Irish maidservant, Saoirse, slowly rotated around her mistress, working diligently on her hair.

"What exactly are you doing, Saoirse?" Lilian asked in her beautiful aristocratic English, her azure eyes fixed on the mirror.

"It's a new style from Russia, m'lady," Saoirse replied in a thick Irish accent. "They call it a milkwoman's braid." So saying, the girl continued round and round Lilian, braiding the young lady's hair in a spiral crown.

"Oh Saoirse, I'm terribly frightened," Lilian lamented. "I am coming of age! Mama says I must dance at my ball, and several young suitors have been invited. Even that dreadful William of Broadbury Estate." Lilian wrinkled her nose at the thought of said young man.

"It'll be alright, m'lady," Saoirse replied soothingly. "You're so lovely, no one will see you're nervous."

A knock sounded at the door. "Enter," Lilian called. In stepped the housemaid Margaret, looking excited.

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"Lady Lilian!" The girl fairly

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Lilian's eyes lit up.

/"Grandfather!"/

Chapter 2 by SaintSayaka



Grandfather, Lilian had quickly discovered, was one of the few men in her family - and perhaps the world - that she could she could speak frankly to. She ran over to him just as Saoirse has completed the braid, tying it together not a second too late.

When they hugged, she already knew the answer on his tongue. She withdrew from his arms and smiled at him matter-of-factly.

"No girls at the ball," she said, shaking her head. "He didn't even invite the princesses from the very kingdoms we'll have princes from."

Her grandfather shook his head. "Your mother married a fool, unfortunately."

Lilian had no reaction to that. She didn't know much about her long-passed mother except what her grandfather would tell her. And that was often, one, about how beautiful she was ("You look more like her every time I visit," he would say) and how she married a fool. She used to dislike it a little whenever he would insult Father.

But ever since Lilian had revealed that she wasn't interested in men and suffered her father's wrath as a result? She was finding that statement had a certain type of comfort to it.

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